DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 658 SP 028 569

AUTHOR Barrett, Joan
TITLE Evaluation of Student Teachers. ERIC Digest 13.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 86
CONTRACT 400-83-0022
NOTE 4p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; *Evaluators; Higher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; *Student Teacher Evaluation; Student Teaching
IDENTIFIERS ERIC Digests

ABSTRACT

Public criticism of teachers has put pressure on teacher educators to prepare their students better. Any process to strengthen teacher education programs must include a careful study of student teaching since it is usually the final education course taken by students and the most influential field experience in a teacher education program. Many teacher education programs use student teaching as the primary exit evaluation of student competencies. Yet factors such as questionable measurement instruments and untrained evaluators prevent effective evaluation. This digest discusses the purpose of student teacher evaluation, criteria, measurement tools, evaluators, and elements of success. (JD)

COMPLETED

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

NOV 1 6 1987

ED 1.310/2:278658

ED278658

466-A-3

EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS

ERIC DIGEST 12

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON TEACHER EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SP028569

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ORIGINAL

CLEARINGHOUSE ON TEACHER EDUCATION

ERIC DIGEST 13

1986

Evaluation of Student Teachers

Public criticism of teachers has put pressure on teacher educators to prepare their students better. Any process to strengthen teacher education programs must include a careful study of student teaching since it is usually the final education course taken by students and the most influential field experience in a teacher education program (Kingen 1984). Many teacher education programs use student teaching as the primary exit evaluation of student competencies (Ashburn and Fisher 1984). Yet factors such as questionable measurement instruments and untrained evaluators prevent effective evaluation. This digest discusses the purpose of student teacher evaluation, criteria, measurement tools, evaluators, and elements of success.

Purpose of Student Teacher Evaluation

There are numerous reasons for evaluating student teachers during their practice-teaching experience in a K-12 setting (Defino 1983). Programs usually state the purposes as screening students for entry into the teaching profession and informing student teachers about skills that need to be strengthened. Often, evaluation is used to prove to state or national program approval agencies that student teachers are doing what the institution said they would during the field experience.

Evaluating students for program improvement is another purpose (Ashburn and Fisher 1984). For example, a teacher education program may require student teachers to demonstrate the ability to plan instructional units. If evaluation shows most student teachers have problems in planning, then an adjustment can be made in the program.

Evaluation Criteria

Disagreement occurs among programs about what knowledge, skills, and attitudes are necessary in an effective student teacher (Ashburn and Fisher 1984). Research on teacher effectiveness has included attempts to identify "good" teacher characteristics. The belief that effective teachers possess universal traits is so strong that characteristics such as voice quality and sense of humor have become permanent items on student teacher evaluation scales. But no research has shown effective teachers to have specific characteristics in all teaching situations (Fant et al. 1985).

Research also has been done to relate effectiveness with degree of pupil learning. Wiersma and Gibney (1985) argue that the research base in this area is inadequate to support pupil learning as the sole basis for determining student teacher competence. They also contend that teaching is a profession like medicine and law; thus, practitioners cannot guarantee results.

Competency based teacher education (CBTE) programs that emerged in the 1970s consider student teaching performance to be a demonstration of competencies accumulated during the teacher education program. Thus, student teachers are observed in the classroom and evaluated based on competencies displayed such as subject matter presentation and planning skills. While there is a lack of evidence that one set of teacher competencies leads to more pupil learning than another (Moore and Markham 1983), competencies assessed by programs overlap considerably.

Institutions that use the same evaluation criteria often have different priorities (McIntyre and Norris 1980). For example, one teacher education program may consider classroom management the most important area to be evaluated while another may place the highest priority on personal characteristics and personality.

Evaluation Tools

Teacher education programs tend to develop their own evaluation forms to determine student teacher effectiveness. In a survey of 178 U.S. colleges and universities, Fant et al. (1985) found teacher education programs used rating scales, daily logs, anecdotal records, behavioral coding, and self-assessment for evaluating student teachers. More than half of the institutions surveyed used rating scales.

Two instruments used frequently in student teacher evaluation research have been adopted by some CBTE programs (Defino 1983). The Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument (TPAI) lists competency indicators and sets of descriptors. The evaluator decides how well the student teacher's performance meets the competency described. The Classroom Observation Keyed for Research (COKER) instrument requires the evaluator to record specified behavior demonstrated by the student teacher. Research shows these instruments to be reliable, i.e., the scores of an individual remain relatively consistent on repeated measurements. Validity, i.e., whether the instruments measure what they are supposed to, remains questionable, however (Defino 1983).

Research indicates that student teaching grades usually are high regardless of the evaluation instrument used. Inflated grades may be because of improved field experiences before student teaching (Defino 1983). In addition, many incompetent or marginal students elect or are counseled out of teacher education programs. The high grades could reflect an evaluation of the student teachers' potential rather than a measure of demonstrated skills. Other reasons, however, stem from the evaluators who judge student teaching.

Evaluators

The effectiveness of the evaluation process is based on the person assessing the students (Ashburn and Fisher 1984). A faculty supervisor from the teacher education program and a "cooperating" teacher in whose classroom the student teacher is

SP 028 569

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION
One Dupont Circle • Suite 610 • Washington, DC 20036

assigned serve as evaluators of student teaching. Research on the interaction of student teacher, cooperating teacher, and faculty supervisor indicates the cooperating teacher has the predominant influence on the student. Student teachers often adopt the classroom management style and attitudes of their cooperating teachers (McIntyre 1984). Thus, it is not surprising that cooperating teachers tend to give positive evaluations to these students.

Cooperating teachers avoid "unsatisfactory" and "below satisfactory" ratings when using typical evaluation forms with ratings ranging from a strongly agree/highly positive assessment to a strongly disagree/highly negative assessment (Phelps et al. 1986). The teachers seem to concentrate on one skill that a student teacher demonstrates effectively and then generalize to all skills. For example, a student teacher highly competent in instructional procedures might have a inadequate knowledge base in the subject being taught. The cooperating teacher still would rank the student highly in all areas because of the strong, positive impressions made when interacting with pupils.

Faculty supervisors also have difficulties when evaluating student teachers since the supervisors "serve as coaches as well as judges. Very often we find ourselves judging the coaching." (Ashburn and Fisher 1984) Evaluation reports containing supervisor and cooperating teacher comments become part of the student teacher's permanent record and can affect employment opportunities. Comparisons between superior and average student teachers cannot be made when reading the reports because of grade inflation.

The lack of consistent procedures and criteria among cooperating teachers further hinders the evaluation process and can cause the student teaching experience to have a negative impact on teacher education program goals (Ervay 1982). Teacher education programs must rely on public schools to find the cooperating teachers. Forty-four states, however, require no formal credentialing process for cooperating teachers, and public school personnel usually select cooperating teachers based only on teaching experience (Morris et al. 1985).

Elements of Success

Many evaluation tools used throughout the United States have adequate reliability (Defino 1983). Validity, however, often has not been established. Training cooperating teachers to use evaluation instruments reduces judgment errors, however, and can increase the tool's validity (Phelps et al. 1986).

Evaluation instruments continue to be refined through research. For example, South Carolina recently developed the Assessment of Performance in Teaching (APT) instrument after field study tests for objectivity, reliability, and validity (Brooks et al. 1985). The APT measures minimal competency rather than proficiency. It only determines whether teachers use basic teaching skills in the classroom. Any educator who uses the APT must successfully complete reliability training.

Additional training in supervision practices also ensures that cooperating teachers are competent in other areas (Morris et al. 1985). Good cooperating teachers must be able to analyze, guide, and evaluate teaching as well as demonstrate effective teaching (Kingen 1984). These abilities and adequate measurement instruments lead to improvement in evaluating student teachers.

References

Many of the following references—those identified with an EJ or ED number—have been abstracted and are in the ERIC database. The journal articles should be available at most research libraries. The documents (citations with an ED number) are available on microfiche in ERIC microfiche collections at more than 700 locations. Documents also can be ordered through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Call (800) 227-3742 for price and order information. For a list of ERIC collections in your area or for information on submitting documents to ERIC, contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 610, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 293-2450.

Ashburn, E.A. and R.L. Fisher (Co-Editors.) "Methods of Assessing Teacher Education Students." ISU-AACTE Conference Proceedings, Normal, Illinois, July 1984. ED 255 493.

Brooks A. et al. *Testing for Student Teaching Competence and Its Implications.* 1985. ED 254 515.

Defino, M.E. *The Evaluation of Student Teachers.* 1983. ED 240 103.

Ervay, Stuart. *A Study of Cooperating Teacher Behaviors Which Are Compatible with Established Goals of Teacher Education.* 1982. ED 242 683.

Fant, H.E., C. Hill, A.M. Lee, and R. Landes. "Evaluating Student Teachers: The National Scene." *The Teacher Educator* 21.2 (Autumn 1985): 2-8.

Kingen, S. "Does the Left Hand Really Know What the Right Hand is Doing? An Informal Look at the Selection and Evaluation of Cooperating Teachers." *The Teacher Educator* 20.1 (Summer 1984): 2-13.

McIntyre, D.J. "A Response to the Critics of Field Experience Supervision." *Journal of Teacher Education* 35.3 (May-June 1984): 42-45.

McIntyre, D.J. and W.R. Norris. "The State of the Art of Preservice Teacher Education Programs and Supervision of Field Experiences." *Action in Teacher Education* 2.3 (Summer 1980): 67-69.

Moore, K.D. and J.S. Markham. "A Competency Model for the Evaluation of Teacher Education Program Graduates." *The Teacher Educator* 19.1 (Summer 1983): 20-31.

Morris, J.E., S.K. Pannell, and W.R. Houston. "Certification of Supervising Teachers: A Process for Improving Teacher Effectiveness." *The Teacher Educator* 20.3 (Winter 1985): 7-15.

Phelps, L., C.D. Schmitz, and B. Boatright. "The Effects of Halo and Leniency on Cooperating Teacher Reports Using Likert-Type Rating Scales." *Journal of Educational Research* 79.3 (January-February 1986): 151-154.

Wiersma, W. and T. Gibney. "Observation as an Approach to Measuring Teacher Competency." *Action in Teacher Education* 7.1-2 (Spring-Summer 1985): 59-67.

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Elizabeth A. Ashburn, Director
Margaret Mann, Associate Director
Joan Barrett, Staff Writer

OERI Office of Educational Research and Improvement

This publication was prepared with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under contract no. 400-83-0022. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of OERI or the Department.

ERIC

Educational Resources Information Center. The nationwide information system initiated in 1966 by the U.S. Department of Education, ERIC is the largest and most frequently used education data base in the world.